

The Commoner.

of the great financiers; they breathe the poisoned air that has passed through the lungs of Wall Street. No financial policy is too cruel, no dollar too dear, no money system too despotic for them to endorse; provided, always, it has the endorsement of the money changers. They not only want to make gold the only standard money, but they want to retire the greenbacks and substitute national bank notes. They often prate of their love of Jefferson, and yet they know that Jefferson was always and at all times the enemy of banks of issue. They conjure with the name of Jackson, and yet Jackson made his greatest reputation fighting a bank of issue. If these papers had their way the democratic party would disregard entirely the interests which the masses have in a stable dollar, and would make the party the exponent of those whom Carlisle once described as the "idle holders of idle capital."

On the question of imperialism these papers do not entirely agree. The World still condemns an imperial policy, while the Courier-Journal and the Chronicle advocate a surrender to the republicans on this issue.

The Courier-Journal admits that the democratic position is the correct one so far as principles are concerned, but contends that commercialism is bound to win and that the democratic party should "get into the band wagon." It preaches the gospel of expediency—a doctrine which demoralizes the party by making everything subordinate to the desire to win a temporary success.

The Chronicle goes a little farther and declares that the democratic party would not carry out the promise made last fall, even if it could. The following is from a recent editorial in that paper:

"There will be no revolution in American politics which will result in conferring independence on the people of the Philippines. If the democrats should carry the next presidential election, and should elect a majority in both houses of congress, the Philippines would not be abandoned. They are with us for good or for evil, as time shall determine, and it is mostly for them to say whether it shall be for their good."

It will be remembered that the democratic national convention of 1900, without a dissenting vote, and amid unparalleled enthusiasm, declared it to be the duty of this nation to immediately announce its purpose: First, to establish a stable government in the Philippines; second, to turn that government over to the Filipinos and give them independence, and third, to protect the Filipinos from outside interference as we have protected the republics of Central and South America. There was difference of opinion as to the wording of the money plank, but none as to the party's position on imperialism. And, yet, the Courier-Journal and the Chronicle are willing to give up the defense of the Declaration of Independence and accept the republican theory of government—a theory identical with that announced by George the Third.

On the trust question no two of the three papers agree. The World is very much afraid of the trusts, but does not know what to do about them; the Courier Journal does not know whether it is afraid or not, and the Chronicle

isn't worried at all, but all three of the papers lose no opportunity to misrepresent and malign those who are in earnest in their efforts to destroy private monopolies.

The papers above mentioned illustrate the confusion, conflict and uncertainty that prevail among those who oppose the Kansas City platform. If a convention were called of the daily papers which want to repudiate the Kansas City platform and their editors were required to submit a new platform satisfactory to all of them they would adjourn sine die before they agreed upon a single important plank. They represent all shades of opinion on every question and are harmonious about nothing except their contempt for the patriotism and intelligence of the more than six million voters who in spite of corruption and coercion supported the party in two national campaigns. The Kansas City platform is a positive, clear and emphatic application of democratic principles to present conditions. When a person stands upon that platform and gives to it his unqualified endorsement the people know what to expect of him.

The opponents of that platform, however, quarrel and contend over every proposition submitted. Some want the party to declare boldly for the gold standard; others favor a cowardly evasion of the whole question. Some want the party to declare openly in favor of banks of issue; others want the party to keep still on the question in its platform, but to lend the party's influence after election to the retirement of the greenbacks.

Some want the party to continue the fight against imperialism; some want the party to quit opposing imperialism and acquiesce in it without endorsing it, while others think that the party should have the courage to commend the administration's course. Some think that all trusts are bad; some think that a part of the trusts are good and a part of them bad, and still others believe that the trust is an economic development that is entirely beneficent in its operations.

The difference of opinion which manifests itself in the discussion of the larger questions is no less conspicuous in the discussion of minor questions. Because they can agree upon no platform the reorganizers content themselves with criticising Democratic principles and republican individuals.

Is it strange that the Democratic party has made slow progress when it is remembered that for five years the leading dailies, which claim to be Democratic, have given more assistance to the opposition than to their own party? Between campaigns they have been condemning the platform of the party and discrediting those who endorsed the platform; it is impossible for such papers to repair during the campaign the damage which they do between campaigns. But for the weekly papers which have for the most part remained loyal, the Democratic voters would have had little opportunity to read Democratic literature. The republicans on the contrary, have all their daily papers, all their weekly papers and a considerable portion of the so-called Democratic dailies continuously explaining and in whole or

in part defending the course of the administration. The only wonder is that the rank and file of the party should have shown itself as steadfast as it has. If those who call themselves Democrats will defend the Democratic platform for the next three years we can win in 1904; but it is difficult to win when a numerically small but financially influential portion of the party is constantly compromising with the republicans.

Mr. Knox and His Secrets.

The American Anti-Trust League has sent to Attorney General Knox the following letter:

Sir: We have the honor to request that you afford us all the information that you are possessed of or can obtain concerning an agreement or agreements made between the constituent companies and individuals who organized the United States Steel corporation, commonly known as the steel trust.

"The trust or syndicate agreement which we especially desire is the one which President C. M. Schwab of the United States Steel corporation refused to furnish to the United States industrial commission when on the witness stand before that body.

"Our request is founded upon information and belief that at the time that this contract, or these contracts, was, or were, made you were in some way officially connected with the Carnegie Steel company, which institution is one of the principal companies in the United States Steel corporation. As this information is doubtless in your possession or conveniently at hand, you will greatly oblige this committee by giving us the substance thereof in your own language, or, if possible, a copy thereof.

"This request is to cover any other contracts of a similar kind with which you are acquainted or which you can obtain for us. Our object is to prevent the failure of justice in certain legal proceedings which we contemplate in the near future."

It is not at all probable that the Attorney General will comply with this request. He will have good professional grounds for refusing to comply with it because he may say that whatever information he possesses concerning the trust was obtained in the capacity of attorney for the Trust, and therefore it would be impossible for him to reveal his secret.

This emphasizes the iniquity of selecting a trust attorney for an office upon which rests the responsibility for enforcing laws against trusts. The Attorney General should be entirely free to act in the prosecution of violators of the anti-trust law. But would it be possible for even the warmest friend of Mr. Knox to say that he is in a position to discharge his duty as the attorney for the United States when that duty conflicts with the interests of the trust? Here we have the attorney for one client who has in his possession the secrets of his client's opponent. Those secrets are sufficient to enable that client's lawyer to crush that client's opponent. Yet the lawyer is unable to take advantage of those secrets because of the fact that he obtained them in the capacity of an attorney. It would be very difficult for Mr. Knox to draw the line between the secrets he obtained in a confidential capacity while acting as attorney for the trusts and the secrets of the trust which he obtains